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Request – Information on Afro-German Children in the Rhineland

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[Jordan Lassiter](#) filed this request with the [National Archives and Records Administration](#) of the [United States of America](#).

Tracking #	24-46933
Submitted	May 31, 2024
Est. Completion	None

STATUS

Awaiting Appeal

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From: Jordan Lassiter 05/31/2024

Subject: Freedom of Information Act Request: Request – Information on Afro-German Children in the ... [Email](#)

Date: May 31, 2024

National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road
College Park, MD 20740-6001

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Subject: Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request – Information on Afro-German Children in the Rhineland

Dear FOIA Officer,

Under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552, I hereby request access to and copies of all records held by the National Archives and Records Administration pertaining to Afro-German children born to French-African soldiers and German women during the post-World War I occupation of the Rhineland, from January 1, 1920, to December 31, 1950. This request includes both classified and unclassified documents, as well as records pending declassification.

For the purpose of this request, the records I seek include, but are not limited to:

1. Folders and Indexes: Any folders, indexes, or finding aids for records related to Afro-German children in the Rhineland.
2. Declassified Documents: Any declassified documents, reports, or communications related to Afro-German children in the Rhineland.
3. Classified and Pending Declassification Documents: Any classified documents or those pending declassification that pertain to Afro-German children in the Rhineland.
4. Transcripts: Transcripts of communications between U.S. government entities and German authorities concerning Afro-German children in the Rhineland.
5. Investigations: Records of any investigations or assessments conducted by U.S. agencies involving Afro-German children in the Rhineland.
6. Correspondences: Correspondences between U.S. government officials discussing Afro-German children in the Rhineland.
7. Social Reports: Documents and reports on the social and economic conditions of Afro-German children in the Rhineland.
8. Military Records: Information on U.S. military observations and activities related to Afro-German children in the Rhineland.
9. Cultural Exchanges: Records of cultural exchange programs or collaborations involving Afro-German children in the Rhineland.
10. Human Rights Assessments: Documents related to human rights assessments or impact studies involving Afro-German children in the Rhineland.

Should any portion of the requested records be deemed exempt from disclosure, I request the release of any reasonably segregable non-exempt portions in accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 552(b). If an entire document is exempt, I request a justification, citing specific FOIA exemptions, and provision of an exemption log as per *Vaughn v. Rosen*, 484 F.2d 820 (D.C. Cir. 1973).

Please note your obligation under the law not to destroy any records potentially responsive to this request. Any withholding, redaction, or destruction of responsive records without proper justification constitutes a violation of the FOIA and is subject to litigation, as confirmed in *Kissinger v. Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press*, 445 U.S. 136, 150 (1980).

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(Classified National Security Information), agencies are required to appropriately handle records of historical interest.

Enclosed is a letter requesting a fee waiver for the processing of this request. As an independent investigative journalist associated with TransparencyReport.pw, I believe that the information I seek is in the public interest and its disclosure contributes significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government. The public interest standard is further supported by the criteria established in 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii).

If the enclosed waiver is not accepted and there are any potential charges in excess of \$200 associated with fulfilling my request, please inform me in advance.

As stipulated by the FOIA, I look forward to your response within twenty business days (5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(A)(i)). Given the complexity and scope of this request, I understand it may take additional time to process. Therefore, I request an update on the status of my request within thirty business days. I am willing to accommodate a one-time extension, provided that I am informed in advance with a specific time frame for the extension.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Jordan Lassiter

Independent Investigative Journalist

TransparencyReport.pw

Email: Jordan@Lassiter.eu

Enclosure: Fee Waiver Request Letter

Please be aware: All communications related to this request, including incoming and outgoing communications, will be publicly available on [MuckRock.com](https://muckrock.com). Additionally, any correspondence in relation to this request will be instantly published on the platform.



Fee_Waiver_Letter_copy.pdf

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From: National Archives and Records Administration

06/06/2024

Subject: Fwd: Freedom of Information Act Request: Request – Information on Afro-German Children in...

[Email](#)

Dear Jordan Lassiter:

Thank you for submitting your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) via email to foia@nara.gov. We received your request on May 31, 2024. Your request states:

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Under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552, I hereby request access to and copies of all records held by the National Archives and Records Administration pertaining to Afro-German children born to French-African soldiers and German women during the post-World War I occupation of the Rhineland, from January 1, 1920, to December 31, 1950. This request includes both classified and unclassified documents, as well as records pending declassification. For the purpose of this request, the records I seek include, but are not limited to:

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4. Transcripts: Transcripts of communications between U.S. government entities and German authorities concerning Afro-German children in the Rhineland.

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7. Social Reports: Documents and reports on the social and economic conditions of Afro-German children in the Rhineland.

8. Military Records: Information on U.S. military observations and activities related to Afro-German children in the Rhineland.

9. Cultural Exchanges: Records of cultural exchange programs or collaborations involving Afro-German children in the Rhineland.

10. Human Rights Assessments: Documents related to human rights assessments or impact studies involving Afro-German children in the Rhineland.

Our office handles FOIA and Privacy Act requests for NARA's operational records (records created by this agency). Because your FOIA request is for records that may be archival records (records created by or originated in a



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NARA), we are forwarding it by this email to our Office of Research Services, Textual Reference (RR2RR) staff who handle FOIA requests for textual archival records.

That office will assign your request a tracking number and respond directly to you. In the future, if you need to follow up with that office directly, please contact them at the address below, or electronically via email (email is preferred).

National Archives and Records Administration
Research Services, Textual Reference Branch (RR2RR)
8601 Adelphi Road, Room 2400
College Park, MD 20740

Phone: 301-837-3091

Fax: 301-837-1752

Email: archives2reference@nara.gov

For your reference, a copy of your request is below.

Please visit our website at www.archives.gov/foia for further information about making a FOIA request to NARA. On our main website, www.archives.gov, you can learn more about the resources we offer to the public, and you can access our online catalog.

Sincerely,

<<https://www.archives.gov/>>

Operational FOIA Division

8601 Adelphi Road

College Park, Maryland, 20740-6001

301-837-3642

<<https://www.archives.gov/foia>> <foia@nara.gov>

<<https://www.archives.gov/foia/contacts>>

<<https://www.archives.gov/foia/electronic-reading-room>>

<<https://www.archives.gov/ogis/resources>>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: <requests@muckrock.com>



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Subject: Freedom of Information Act Request: Request – Information on Afro-German Children in the Rhineland

To: <foia@nara.gov>

Nat'l Archives & Records Admin

FOIA Office

Room 3110

8601 Adelphi Road

College Park, MD 20740

May 31, 2024

Date: May 31, 2024

National Archives and Records Administration

8601 Adelphi Road

College Park, MD 20740-6001

Subject: Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request – Information on Afro-German Children in the Rhineland

Dear FOIA Officer,

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Please note your obligation under the law not to destroy any records potentially responsive to this request. Any withholding, redaction, or destruction of responsive records without proper justification constitutes a violation of the FOIA and is subject to litigation, as confirmed in *Kissinger v. Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press*, 445 U.S. 136, 150 (1980). Additionally, per the Presidential Records Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 22) and Executive Order 13526 (Classified National Security Information), agencies are required to appropriately handle records of historical interest.

Enclosed is a letter requesting a fee waiver for the processing of this request. As an independent investigative journalist associated with [TransparencyReport.pw](#), I believe that the information I seek is in the public interest and its disclosure contributes significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government. The public interest standard is further supported by the criteria established in 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii).

If the enclosed waiver is not accepted and there are any potential charges in excess of \$200 associated with fulfilling my request, please inform me in advance.

As stipulated by the FOIA, I look forward to your response within twenty business days (5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(A)(i)). Given the complexity and scope of this request, I understand it may take additional time to process.

Therefore, I request an update on the status of my request within thirty



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business days. I am willing to accommodate a one-time extension, provided that I am informed in advance with a specific time frame for the extension.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Jordan Lassiter

Independent Investigative Journalist

TransparencyReport.pw

Email: Jordan@Lassiter.eu

Enclosure: Fee Waiver Request Letter

Please be aware: All communications related to this request, including incoming and outgoing communications, will be publicly available on [MuckRock.com](https://www.muckrock.com). Additionally, any correspondence in relation to this request will be instantly published on the platform.

View request history, see one related attachment, upload responsive documents, and report problems here:

<https://www.muckrock.com/>

If prompted for a passcode, please enter:

.....

Attachments:

- Fee_Waiver_Letter_copy.pdf

Filed via [MuckRock.com](https://www.muckrock.com)

E-mail (Preferred): requests@muckrock.com

PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESS

For mailed responses, please address (see note):

MuckRock News

DEPT MR 164452

263 Huntington Ave

Boston, MA 02115

PLEASE NOTE: This request is not filed by a MuckRock staff member, but is being sent through MuckRock by the above in order to better track, share, and manage public records requests. Also note that improperly addressed (i.e., with the requester's name rather than "MuckRock News" and the department number) requests might be returned as undeliverable.



Fee Waiver Letter copy

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Subject: Re: [24-46933]-Freedom of Information Act Request-Jordan Lassiter

[Email](#)

Dear Jordan Lassiter:

This is in reply to your Freedom of Information Act request, dated 5/31/2024 for records relating to Afro-German children born to French-African soldiers and German women during the Post World War I occupation of the Rhineland from January 1, 1920 to December 31, 1950. Your request was received in this office on 6/6/2024 and assigned the case number 24-46933.

The records you are requesting are located in Record Group 120 - Records of the American Expeditionary Forces (World War I) <<https://www.archives.gov/findingaid/stat/discovery/120>> and are declassified and open for public viewing in our research room at the National Archives in College Park, MD. We are staffed to assist researchers with their work. Since there are no access restrictions on these documents, there is no need to file a Freedom of Information Act request with the National Archives.

A few potential series of interest include but are not limited to:

-

Reports, Studies, Monographs, and Other Records Relating to Activities of the Third Army, November 15, 1918–April 2, 1919

<<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/650069>> (Entry NM-91 931)

-

Correspondence and Reports of the American Liaison Officer with the French Army on the Rhine, 1920–1922

<<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/6861811>> (Entry NM-91 1381)

-

General Correspondence of the Office of the Commandant at Coblenz, 1920–1923 <<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/6861416>> (Entry NM-91 1408)

-

General Records of the Headquarters Detachment, 1920–1923

<<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/6872953>> (Entries NM-91 1412, NM-91 1413, NM-91 1414, NM-91 1415)

-

General Correspondence of the Chief Signal Officer, 1919–1923

<<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/6877020>>(Entry NM-91 1480)



Some of the series will be arranged following the War Department Decimal File System <<https://www.archives.gov/research/guides/war-dept>>, a few decimal numbers of interest include:

-

291.2 - Race

-

291.12 - Marriage

-

291.13 - Parentage

We would be happy to make the records available to you in the Textual Research Room at the National Archives at College Park, MD. Please visit our website for information about visiting the National Archives at College Park <<https://www.archives.gov/college-park>>, including how to schedule a research visit. Scheduling an appointment in advance is encouraged but not required.

All researchers must register for a researcher card. Please complete the online researcher orientation <[https://rise.articulate.com/share/uK5NGkSpg74JHLTOcGPmM4e94MJyxQgD#/> as well as the online researcher registration form <<https://researchercommunity.force.com/securitycentral/s/kiosk-registration>> before scheduling an appointment.](https://rise.articulate.com/share/uK5NGkSpg74JHLTOcGPmM4e94MJyxQgD#/)

If you are unable to visit our facility, you may wish to employ a professional researcher to carry out research on your behalf. The National Archives maintains a list of professional researchers online: <http://www.archives.gov/research/hire-help/>.

We do not consider this a denial of your FOIA request. However, if you are not satisfied with our action on this request, your options for appeal and dispute resolution are outlined in the attachment. If you have any questions, you may reach us at archives2reference@nara.gov.

This completes the processing of your request.

Sincerely,

MOLLY KAMPH

Archives II Reference, Research Rooms &

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Augmented Processing Branch

National Archives at College Park (Archives II)

molly.kamph@nara.gov

www.archives.gov



FOIA Appeal and Dispute Resolution Options

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From: Jordan Lassiter

06/14/2024

Subject: RE: Freedom of Information Act Request: Request – Information on Afro-German Children in t...

[Email](#)

Subject: Re: [24-46933]-Freedom of Information Act Request-Jordan Lassiter

Dear Molly Kamph,

Thank you for your detailed response regarding my FOIA request for records relating to Afro-German children born to French-African soldiers and German women during the Post World War I occupation of the Rhinelands.

While I appreciate the information provided and the accessibility of the records at the National Archives in College Park, MD, I am specifically interested in any documents or records that may have been missed or not yet declassified relating to the subject matter. To be thorough, I request a search for any additional files, reports, or correspondences that have not been declassified but pertain to the following:

1. Any internal memos or communications regarding the official stance or actions taken by the U.S. government or military concerning Afro-German children and their families during the specified period.
2. Detailed reports or studies focusing on the social, economic, and health conditions of Afro-German children and their mothers during the occupation.
3. Correspondence or reports involving diplomatic interactions between the U.S., French, and German governments regarding the status and treatment of Afro-German children.
4. Any psychological or sociological research conducted or commissioned by the U.S. military or government during this period on the impact of occupation on mixed-race children.

I also request a thorough review of the following series and entries, and any related records that may not be immediately accessible:

- General Records of the Headquarters Detachment, 1920–1923 (Entries NM-91 1412, NM-91 1413, NM-91 1414, NM-91 1415) <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/6872953>

• General Correspondence of the Chief Signal Officer, 1919–1922 (Entry NM-91 1490)

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Additionally, if there are any pending declassification reviews or records scheduled for future release that are relevant to my request, I would appreciate being informed about their status and potential availability dates.

Some of the series will be arranged following the War Department Decimal File System <https://www.archives.gov/research/guides/war-dept>, with specific interest in the following decimal numbers:

- 291.2 - Race
- 291.12 - Marriage
- 291.13 - Parentage

I am specifically requesting any electronic records associated with the above decimal numbers to facilitate quicker access and review. This request includes, but is not limited to, digital versions of reports, correspondences, memos, and any other relevant documents.

Under 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(3)(C), I am requesting these records be provided in an electronic format to the extent possible. If some records are only available in physical form, please inform me of the process to access or convert these records.

Additionally, I would like to treat this communication as an appeal for any potential denial or non-disclosure of relevant records. Under 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(A)(i), if any part of my request is denied, please provide the specific reasons for the denial and the name and title of the individual responsible for the decision.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

Jordan Lassiter

Files



05/31/2024

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06/06/2024

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